

Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Humanity:

The Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, endeavours in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation, and lasting peace among all peoples.

Impartiality:

It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class, or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality:

In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious, or ideological nature.

Independence:

The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary service:

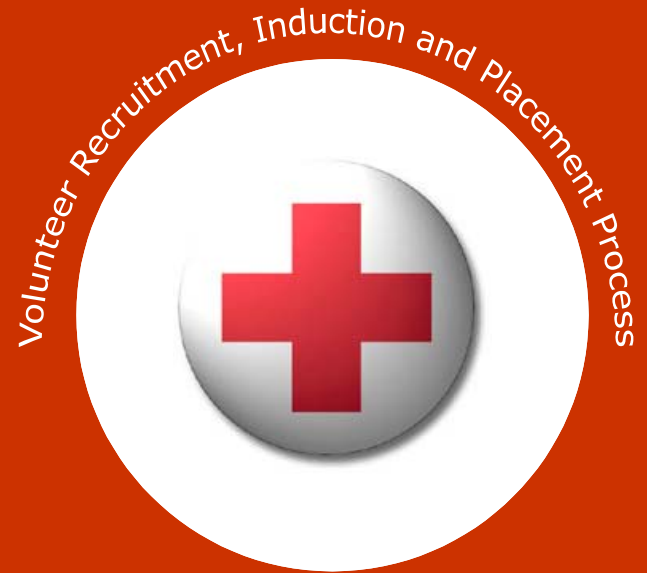
It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity:

There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality:

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide



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Volunteer participation is sometimes prevented at Regional level. This is due to the following obstacles. For example, there may not be enough active volunteers and/or those active do not want further or additional responsibilities; not enough new Volunteers stay in the Institution long enough even if there is a constant flow of new volunteers. In these cases we must analyse our management system and volunteering policy, it could be that we need an internal organisational change: promoting interpersonal communications, respond to needs and worries and reinforce the teamwork. A management system which is both useful and efficient must be created allowing the volunteer to participate in all the action and Institutional stages.

Volunteer Placement: Volunteers Participate in all stages: Activity, culture and Institutional

EXIT- Way out

Voluntary Action must be Appreciated and Recognised as common practice in the Red Cross, of particular important when a volunteer leaves the Institution. Managing better departed volunteers will allow us not only to reduce the number of inactive volunteers, but will also help us to reinsert them as active members.

Way out: management methods used to reduce the number of inactive volunteers and promotes his/her reinsertion

The IV Spanish Red Cross General Branches, present objective is "to increase and consolidate the role of volunteers in the institution". The accomplishment of this objective will greatly depend on the level of commitment adopted by the Local Branches to improve and develop Volunteering (management and organisation).

Introduction



VOLUNTEER INTERVENTION – PLACEMENT TRAINING

Through training we aim to provide the volunteer with the necessary information and skills to carry out the activity in which he /she may be involved. Therefore, this training is linked to the task at hand, type of programme, projects framework and criteria's of the Institution. A forum of Institutional Interventions, a mechanism for reflection and participation within the organisation, organised and self directed to the formal bodies of the organisation.

The Spanish Red Cross has a structured **Training Policy and Programme**, built on the actions carried out by the Red Cross in order to provide the volunteers with the necessary knowledge and skills to perform the activity assigned.

Placement Training: to provide the volunteer with a tailored training programme to successfully perform activity assigned.

PLACEMENT

As a member of the Red Cross you have freely agreed to participate in voluntary actions, but there are other ways in which volunteers participate which we must not forget: **Cultural** and **Institutional** aspects of participation.

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION: The volunteer participates actively in all stages in the action: Identification, Plan, Implementation and Evaluation.

CULTURE PARTICIPATION: Contributes to the development and strengthening of the Institution. Promotes a sense of belonging and encourages interpersonal relations.

INSTITUTIONAL PARTICIPATION: Participation is formalised, structured and defined explicitly in accordance to the legal framework (Statutes and Rules of Procedure). Including socialising by participating, assisting and representing the Institutional in their various activities: platforms, forums, associations, councils...

The Red Cross is by definition a voluntary organisation. Volunteering is the utmost expression of solidarity, a freely adopted commitment with respect and in defence of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Principles, permitting the Red Cross to perform its activities. In essence, volunteers are the institutions trade mark, means of continuity and development as well as its basic ideological value.

The social changes reordered over the last 135 years of the Spanish Red Cross existence, have also affected volunteering, not only in the progressive and constant rise of volunteers but in the way they are streamed-lined by profile, expertise and commitment level. Therefore, new management models must be developed which will improve the volunteer's integration and participation, ultimately consolidating them as the main human capital force in which the Red Cross actions are based.

Local, Provincial and Regional Branches play a fundamental role in this process of change, for it's here where volunteers undertake and strengthen their promise to participate.

How can we define and enforce social participation in our territorial societies? Which organisational model is needed to improve volunteer involvement? How can we increase and reinforce voluntary action? What changes must we introduce to promote volunteers from all segments of society, particularly those who in the current volunteer force are hardly represented? To answer all these and other questions on organisation, motivation and participation of volunteers, our branches are required to perform accurate analyses on various situations identifying our needs, helping us to design suitable intervention strategies. The Volunteer Recruitment, Induction and Placement Process, a guide and useful tool, can be used by all those who directly or indirectly, are in charge of Volunteer Management and Coordination at the Spanish Red Cross.

Volunteer Recruitment, Induction and Placement Process

WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

It consists of a standardised and pre-defined set of guidelines, adapted to each local reality, aiming to ease Volunteer access, induction and placement in the institution.

It helps us to improve the management and organization of volunteers, ensuring suitable supervision and participation of the volunteers. At the same time, these set rules allow the branches to work systematically incorporating pre-existing methodologies.

Volunteer Induction and Placement Process: brief, suitable and flexible.

HOW DOES THE PROCESS WORKS

The process life-cycle has various stages, ranging from those preceding induction (pre-recruitment) to, if the case arises, the volunteer terminating its commitment with the institution (final stage-exit).

Baring this in mind, and taking into account that our initial objective was to design a brief, flexible and suitable procedure for the management and organisation of volunteers; the process must be described as a succession of interrelated phases or stages:



Induction: Potential Volunteers and Candidates become an Institution Member.

VOLUNTARY SERVICE – VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

The Voluntary Service and Permanence Agreement allows us to match the activities to be fulfilled with the volunteers own preferences, to encourage a sense of individual or team responsibility, establish minimal voluntary service requirements (for example: three hours per week for a year) tailored to their personal characteristics and to the each territorial societies workload.

The conditions of the agreement must be viewed in relation to the workload and requirements of the societies; and in the number of active volunteers available on the different programmes. **This commitment should by no means, be viewed as an obstacle or a mere bureaucratic process in achieving volunteer participation, its use should apply to the dynamics of each territorial branch.**

The Volunteer and the Institution enter contract actual obligations as both parties sign the agreement. The Volunteer on the one hand and the Institutional (accountable and responsible of the activity) on the other, this in fact means that the volunteer agrees to participate in the Institutions activities, while the Institution agrees to uphold and protect the volunteers rights and obligations, to provide the necessary premises for his participation and development through out his association (life-cycle) with the Red Cross.

Volunteer Agreement: this commitment aims to ensure permanent coverage of the volunteer action.





BASIC INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING

This is a crucial training unit aimed at providing essential knowledge on the whole of the Institution. At the same time, it tries to provide some answers to the questions, needs and queries of those who have little or no information on the Red Cross or approach us for the very first time.

Red Cross volunteers are expected to be committed not only to the activity assigned within the Institution but with the Institution itself. This is why those wishing to be active supporters of the Red Cross must be familiar with our objectives, principles, organization, projects, intervention plans, as well as basic questions concerning Volunteers (roles, obligations, rights...). This course is vital to the training and should be given without delay; shortly after the personal interview and before Induction, so that the volunteer can start without delay. To achieve this, suitable organisational methods (tailored to the needs of each local reality) must be put into place as soon, briefly and flexible as possible. There are recurrent difficulties like time schedules, availability, training location, and shortage of specialised teachers; despite all of these inconveniences, this unit is compulsory and must be successfully completed.

Basic Institutional Training Course: Is crucial and has to be completed before volunteers can begin activities in the institution.

INDUCTION

In this phase the candidate becomes a member of the Institution and commences activities for the organization: Volunteers are formally admitted after they commit themselves to both the activities and the Institution (Volunteer Agreement), at this point affiliation as a volunteer is completed. Additional screening and orientation programmes may be required in order to readjust the volunteer to the activity. Creating a better match, allowing us not just to provide volunteers with the essential training, but also correctly define their intervention. We know that not all the potential volunteers approaching the Red Cross end up joining the Institution as a volunteer; this is why the orientation process is so important as it's responsible for placing the best profile to the job available.



PROMOTION INTEGRATION AND PARTICIPATION

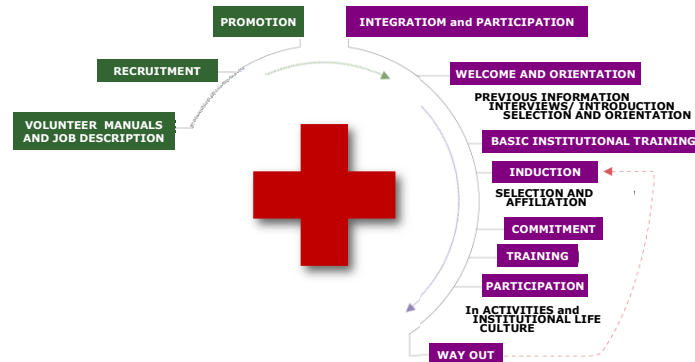
Promotion

We understand promotion not only as means of providing information, awareness and transmission of the values and principles which regulate our organisation, but also as a means of promoting volunteer action among the population.

(Pre-integration Phase)

Integration and Participation

Integration and participation as Red Cross volunteers (ranging from the first contact, as a potential volunteer, to their final activity in our institution-exit).



We advise volunteers to follow all and every phase of the process, maintaining a global perspective allowing interrelation. The process must not be allowed to turn into an **"Obstacle race"**, as to not to hamper or delay the activity assignment or induction of the volunteer to the institution. All things considered, **The Volunteer Promotion and Participation Process should therefore be BRIEF, SUITABLE and FLEXIBLE to the Local reality.**

Volunteer

Promotion,

process

Volunteer

Recruitment,

process

VOLUNTEER MANUAL AND JOB DESCRIPTION

We aim to identify, in all the projects implemented by the Local Branches, which tasks volunteers will have to perform in order to successfully execute their projects. The job description / function of the volunteer will allow us to determine the exact number of volunteers needed, their profiles, their specific training requirements for the job at hand etc., moving on to the next stage of the process: recruitment and selection.

Volunteering is a distinguishing and identifying element that must be included in all Red Cross actions.

Volunteer Manual & Job description: to identify, in all projects, which tasks our volunteers will have to perform.

RECRUITMEN

At the Red Cross, recruitment must be considered a stable and continuous action as to: increase the number of active volunteers in general, strategically place volunteers in specific new projects and/or replace those volunteers who, for some reason or another, have concluded their activities in our Institution; Also addressing those segments of our Society with low representation at the Red Cross (house wife's, university students, pre-retired or retired persons) and seek their active involvement, as their collaboration is precious to us both in terms of experience and availability (time)..

By previously defining the posts and corresponding job descriptions available, specific profiles can be determined and matched, redirecting our **recruitment action**. Volunteers will be recruited and placed, **specifically or directly**, in those segments of the Society which we consider most appropriate.

Recruitment Process: A stable and continuous action.

WELCOME AND ORIENTATION

Volunteering lies at the centre of the Red Cross activities and is welcomed accordingly, we must guarantee and provide the volunteers with an appropriate Orientation programme. If a potential volunteer gets in touch with the Red Cross and does not receive the appropriate information or attention, he or she, most probably, will lose interest and subsequently our efforts and resources invested on promoting volunteer recruitment will be wasted.

To avoid this situation and before we initiate a recruitment campaign we must determine the kind of attention the volunteers will receive, taking into account the following three factors: Any previous information, a personal interview and the selection process. Some suggestions:

- To appoint, at least, a person to attend and inform potential volunteers. (Duties and weekly time table).
- The times set aside to receive potential volunteers must be publicly displayed on the notice board and circulated for the acknowledgement of all members.
- Potential Volunteers will be given information leaflets on the Red Cross, volunteering activities, level of commitment involved, etc. to be handed out to all those who are interested.
- Provide own premises.
- Potential Volunteers may feel ignored or not wanted, in order to avoid this situation and losing a future collaborator information sessions and/or personal interviews must be timetabled within the first ten days. To establish level of motivation, availability and/or experience.
- Selection of volunteers will depend on the interview result.

Welcome and Orientation: Information and attention minimum criteria